

February 3, 1989

TO: Minerals File

FROM: D. Wayne Hedberg, Senior Reclamation Specialist/Hydrologist *DWH*

RE: Joint Agency/Operator Meeting, Reilly Industries (Reilly Tar & Chemical Corp.), Reilly Wendover Plant, M/045/002, Tooele County, Utah

On January 31, 1989, Division Director, Dianne Nielson and D. Wayne Hedberg attended a meeting with representatives from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS), and Reilly Industries. The BLM had arranged the meeting with the aforementioned parties, to discuss the details of a recent BLM Technical Memorandum entitled, "A Comparison of Salt Thicknesses on the Bonneville Salt Flats." Mr. Steven Brooks, the author of the memorandum, presented the document and led a group discussion of its contents.

Three (3) salt thickness surveys have been recorded in the Bonneville Salt Flats area. The surveys focussed their main emphasis in and around the Bonneville Racetrack. Two (2) were performed by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), one in July 1960 and another in October 1974. The BLM conducted their own salt thickness survey during October 1988.

The BLM drilled a series of 117 holes along the raceway repeating the studies previously performed by UDOT. According to Mr. Brook's interpretation of all the data collected to date, a steady reduction in the salt crust thickness has continued to occur (estimate of total volume loss = @1% per year) in this area. It is the BLM's opinion that Reilly Industries subsurface brine extraction and subsequent solar pond evaporation activities, at the Reilly Wendover Plant, are contributing to local and regional salt thickness reductions.

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The BLM's latest Resource Management Plan (RMP) has identified preservation of the salt flats, as a critical environmental concern (CEC) for maintaining historic, current and future recreational use of the area. Subsurface brine extraction and solar pond evaporation activities have been occurring in the area since the early 1930's. Preservation of recreational and/or industrial resource use(s), appears to be the critical issue to be resolved.

The U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) has submitted a preliminary draft proposal to the BLM. This proposal will attempt to qualify and quantify the results of the salt thickness studies performed to date. At the conclusion of the meeting, the BLM agreed to formally solicit comments and technical input from those attending the meeting. Interested parties are to provide comments regarding the basic objectives to be considered within the scope of the final draft of the USGS proposal.

DWH/jb  
cc: Jerry Mansfield, State Lands  
Dianne Nielson  
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MN2/50-51